

MISSIONARY

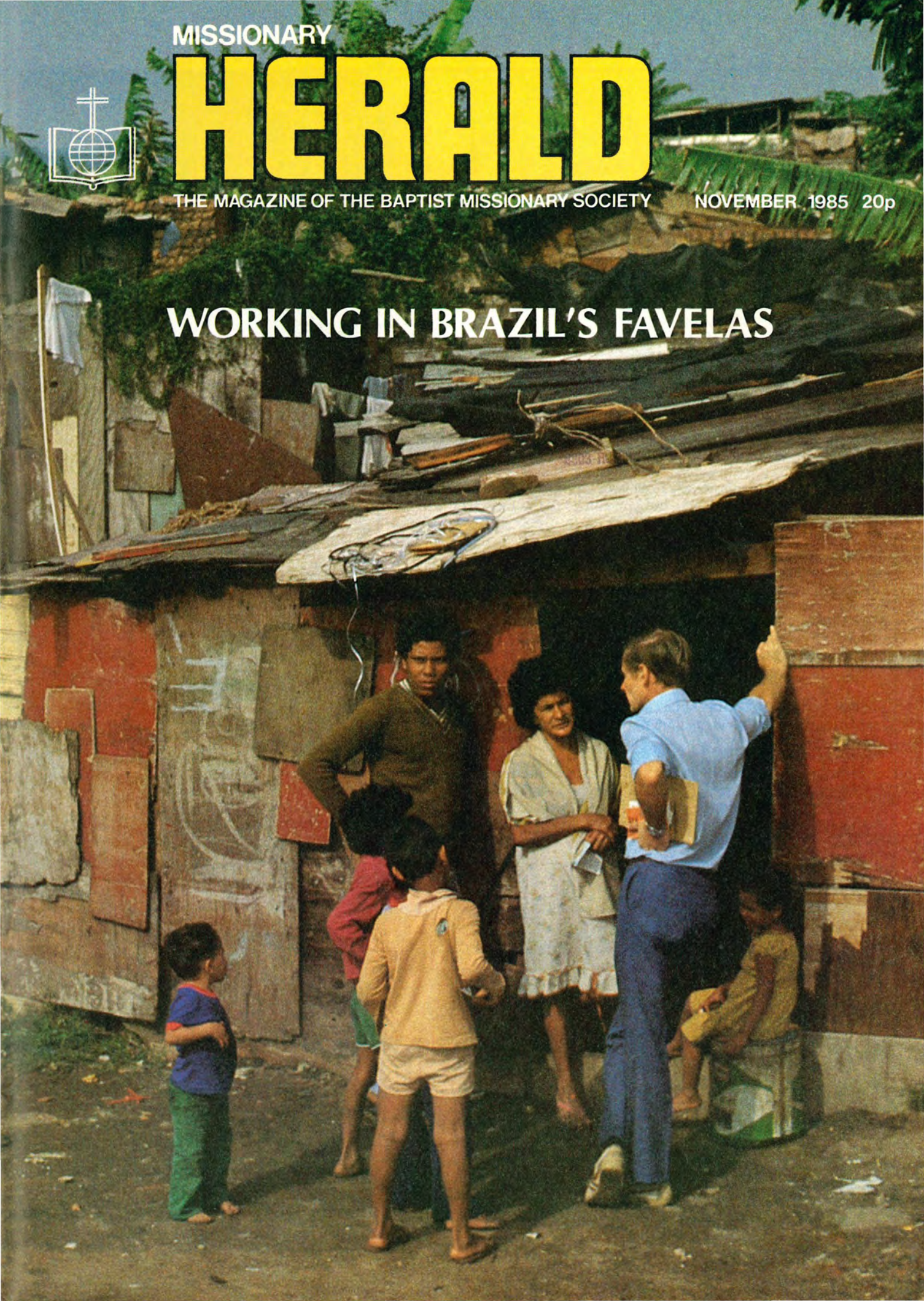


HERALD

THE MAGAZINE OF THE BAPTIST MISSIONARY SOCIETY

NOVEMBER 1985 20p

WORKING IN BRAZIL'S FAVELAS



Editorial Comment

THERE is nothing like a personal contact with a missionary working overseas to stimulate interest, concern and support for BMS and world mission. Unfortunately the 200 or so missionaries now serving with the Society come from only about 150 of our Baptist churches in Britain. Since we are linked with nearly 3,000 churches it means that most have no 'living link'.

This problem was emphasized by the Rev Fred Drake, the London Baptist Missionary Union President, when he spoke at the Autumn Rally in September.

'If you don't have a missionary from your church, you can't go to Moss Bros to be fitted out with one, but you can go to the BMS who will be pleased to help.'

Mr Drake was speaking of the Society's Link Up scheme whereby churches can 'adopt' a missionary or missionary family, taking a supportive interest in the situation where they are serving.

'Seventeen churches in London have missionaries of their own,' Mr Drake pointed out, 'and 33 have adopted a missionary through the Link Up scheme. This means that only 50 churches out of 250 in London have a "living link". There are more churches with missing links.'

In the country as a whole only 317 churches have joined the scheme, which again means that most do not have a personal connection with BMS work overseas.

Not only is the scheme of great interest to the churches in stimulating missionary enthusiasm, the missionaries themselves speak of the encouragement it brings to know that they have the backing of church fellowships. To receive regular letters, to know that people are praying constantly makes them feel that they are not isolated individuals out on a limb, but physically part of the home church reaching out, in Christ's name, to share His good news.

So how about it? Why not forge a 'living link' with one of our missionaries? The Link Up scheme is for you.

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Features

- 203 **HORTA PROJECT – BRAZIL**
New project to help
supplement people's diet
- 204 **MONDAY AFTERNOON
AT THE FAVELA**
Frank Vaughan on
Barber-shop evangelism
- 206 **WHY ARE WE HERE?**
by Robert Draycott
- 208 **FEET**
Are your feet beautiful?
by Joyce Rigden Green
- 210 **SIX MONTHS –
WAS IT WORTH IT?**
Thoughts from a volunteer
by Alison Cottam
- 213 **COMMENTS, QUOTES,
QUESTIONS**
by Dekka
- 214 **MISSIONTALK**
News and views
from home and abroad
- 217 **TALKBACK**
What our readers are thinking
- 218 **CALL TO PRAYER**
Guide for Nepal, Angola, India
and Bangladesh
- 219 **MISSIONARY MOVEMENTS ETC**
-
- Cover Picture – Brazil favela
- We share in the work of the Church in:
- | | | |
|------------|---------|-----------|
| Angola | India | Sri Lanka |
| Bangladesh | Jamaica | Trinidad |
| Brazil | Nepal | Zaire |

ONE of the great paradoxes of Brazil is the great abundance of good land, and yet the existence of hunger and malnutrition which affect so many. A controversial land reform bill is seeking to solve some of the problems at a national level. John Clark, a BMS missionary in Brazil since 1967, is Principal of the West Brazil Theological College at Campo Grande, in the state of Mato Grosso do Sul. He has the responsibility to oversee the 'Horta Project' – an agricultural development project funded by Operation Agri.

'At a local level we are trying to encourage our future leaders to grow vegetables. They receive technical training and practical experience,' he says.



HORTA PROJECT – BRAZIL

A major problem in convincing theological students of the value of this programme is a 'prejudice' against working the land. This attitude comes from a culture which places farming firmly in the hands of the 'peasants'.

John Clark hopes, '... that the pastors, both by example and encouragement, will become catalysts for change'. It may be hard to convince future pastors that this is true, but as John points out, 'A side benefit is cheap, healthy vegetables for our students!'

Operation Agri provided the initial grant to start this scheme. John Clark anticipates that the project will eventually become self supporting.

Through the Horta Project, the soil in the area has been analysed and corrected. The Faculty of the West Brazil Theological College has funded the sinking of an artesian well, which has solved irrigation problems. The well also provides a cheap and plentiful water supply for the Faculty and neighbouring Baptist School.

The 'test site' yielded a crop of lettuce and radishes in June, followed by a

steady supply of vegetables.

'We are learning about local sources of organic fertiliser, and all sorts of things that never entered into my basic theological training!' John Clark says.

Fourth year students at the college

have been studying the importance and implications of land reform from a Biblical perspective.

This is another example of how the BMS and Operation Agri are helping to meet the needs of people, all in the name of Christ.



Top photo: Students learning to work the land
Bottom photo: The fruits of their labour



Monday Afternoon at the Favela

Barber-shop evangelism by Frank Vaughan

JUST after 2 pm we arrived at the room we rent in the *favela*. I got out of the car with Bruna and Dorothy drove off to collect Dona Lourdes to take her to hospital.

Erminio was already in the room with the roller shutter up and with the first customer waiting. Within two minutes Bruna was busy with her scissors cutting the hair of a 15 year old lad. Before she had finished there were several other people waiting, some children with their mothers. Dona Diomira arrived. She sat next to some lads and began to explain an evangelistic tract to one of them.

Then another lad entered jeering at the others. He swaggered about deriding those who were to have their hair cut. I asked if he wanted a hair-cut. 'No, I don't need it,' was the reply. Someone

offered him a tract. He said that he could not read. It was obvious that he just wanted to show off. As he played with a water spray, I waited to see what would happen next. Erminio also observed him from the door.

Worse for drink

Then two men appeared at the door, a bit worse for drink. I asked them if they wanted a hair-cut. The first said: 'I think so, I will accept your invitation.' They were scruffy in appearance and looked like tough customers. The lad, who had been a nuisance, took one look at them and left. He did not come in again.

Slowly we got into conversation with the newcomers. They had just come from work — via a local bar. What sort of work? Digging a well. Manuel was the digger. Aloisio was his mate, the one who hauled up the buckets of soil. I felt sorry for Bruna. Aloisio's hair was caked in red dust. Until Aloisio's turn came Erminio and I talked with them about the Church, the Bible and the Lord Jesus. Neither could read, so tracts were no use, but we established a relationship with both of them.

A fine testimony

I was really impressed with Bruna. For an 18 year old girl, and a young Christian, she showed remarkable maturity and she did a good job on his hair. In fact, she gave a fine testimony during the three hours in which she dealt with various people and heads — without financial compensation.

When closing time came, Erminio said that we had accomplished more in contacts and evangelism than in Sunday School on the previous afternoon. We now await a response to our invitations.

Just before we pulled the shutter down Dorothy arrived back from the hospital. Any success? Oh yes, but what a hospital! Crowds, disorder, insufficient seating and doctors calling out names above the hubbub.

Misdirected

Apparently they were directed along a crowded corridor to await attention

from someone behind a curtain partition. After 40 minutes they reached the front of the queue to be told that they had been misdirected. Upstairs next, to the Gynaecology section. Dona Lourdes was said to have a tumour in the uterus.

Arriving in the appropriate department they met the doctor, a sturdy Japanese man from whom Dona Lourdes shrank.

He asked her her age. She was not sure. 'I think that by my reckoning I must be about 30 years old.' 'Really,' said the doctor, 'by my reckoning I am about 18.'

Next question: Did she live with her husband and have normal relations with him?

'Yes.'

'Any method of contraception?'

'Yes.'

'What was it?'

'A herbal remedy.'

'What is it called?'

'I forget, it's so long since I used it.'

Without further ado the doctor examined her for the tumour in the uterus.

It did not take him long. He came across to Dorothy and said, 'This growth in your uterus is a baby.'

When Dona Lourdes received the news she was tremendously relieved calling out repeatedly: 'Praise the Lord, Praise the Lord.'



Favela family



Why are we here?

Robert Draycott explains why missionaries from Britain are needed in Brazil

OFTEN, during the early months of a missionary's struggles with a new language and a different culture, one asks the question. 'Why are we here?' Sometimes all too conscious of personal failings the emphasis is mainly on the 'we'. At other times looking at the apparent well-being and success of the host church, the emphasis is on, 'Why here, why not another land where the needs seem much greater?'

In this article I will concentrate on this second aspect of the question, not for any lack of personal failings, but because of the nature of the situation in Brazil and the relative strength of the Baptist community here. There is of course much poverty in Brazil, but taking the nation as a whole there is the hope and the potential of dealing with this situation. The country is vast, the resources are there, and the infrastructures, both commercial and political, are being developed. Brazil has a huge foreign debt, but also enormous potential so that its problems do not seem insurmountable.

A greater threat than physical poverty to the nation as a whole is the spiritual poverty. It is still hard to grasp this poverty even after 18 months here. After all Brazil is a Catholic country, there must be something to show for those centuries. Much, in terms of the structures and buildings, but comparatively little, it appears, when we look for results in terms of new lives, and corresponding fruit in the life of the nation. Lack of detailed knowledge prevents me from adding more except to add the positive note of new attitudes and initiatives especially in the last twenty years.

Success story

I am much more concerned however to ask the question 'Why are we here?' in the light of the 103 years of Baptist work which seems to be one long success story, from nothing to 500,000 members in that time. The Brazilian Baptist Convention now has over fifteen seminaries and its own publishing house, supplying Bibles, Sunday School materials, and books for the people. At the state and local level

Baptists are communicating the Gospel via their own television and video programmes as well as via more traditional methods.

To mention one example in more detail, at present we are part of the Northern Association of Mato Grosso do Sul. There are nine churches and two congregations. Two years ago there were three pastors, last year six and now there are ten, leaving only one small church without a resident pastor. At the present, in the State of Mato Grosso do Sul, the problem is not that of having too few pastors to go round. There are enough, and many more are being trained (see John Clark's article in October 1984 for how this challenge is viewed). The problem lies rather in the wide range of training and ability concealed under the title of pastor. Sincerity, faithfulness to that which has been received and evangelistic zeal, are undoubted qualities possessed by the simplest and least trained, but unfortunately a pastor's lack of understanding can soon become that of his people, his limited vision theirs.

The surface of statistics, the healthy ratio of seminary trained pastors to churches, which exists in our state, forces the question, 'Why are we here?' further to the fore, all the more urgently when the three oldest children return to the hostel in São Paulo after what seems an all too brief holiday. The main answer lies in the call of God, but there are also clear signs of need to be seen.

Building up the Church

One factor is that many pastors are misnamed. They are evangelists, good at getting a cause started, but often critically lacking when it comes to building up the body, strengthening the faint hearted, encouraging the weak. A second factor is that the dominance and all-pervading zeal of the pastor can stifle the potential of the ordinary member. The work of the church can become in fact the work of the pastor, who may in fact be coping with his own insecurity which, sub-consciously at least, mitigates against encouraging leadership within the church. There is much work to be done in the area of basic pastoral care and nurture for those already travelling along the

Christian way. Many Brazilian Baptists are aware of the alarming outflow of members from its ranks, although for many years the tremendous influx of new members has concealed the scale of the problem.

Much work is already being done in the area of religious education in the churches. Theological education is burgeoning, yet even in these areas of well established structures (RE) and growth (seminaries) there is a contribution to be made. Are the Biblical and theological foundations firmly laid, deeply rooted in Christ, or are they built on the sand of shallow understanding of both the Biblical revelation and the nature of God and Man? Such a shallow understanding results in a shallow Gospel, which

doesn't penetrate to the depths of the human heart in its blackness and need, nor have any positive message for the society as a whole.

I only learnt to swim in the few months before leaving for Brazil. Until then I had enjoyed paddling in the shallows, but was naturally afraid to go out of my depth. How grateful I am now to the friend who taught me. In the same way the Brazilian Baptists are not lacking in terms of numbers, pastors, and many resources. But there is a certain shallowness. When the water is shallow it is much easier — or necessary to rely on your own strength. Out of your depth you have to trust to the water, so difficult at first but so rewarding.



Helping to plant churches — BMS Missionary Eric Westwood



**'They are beautiful,' says
Joyce Rigden Green**

SITTING in the waiting room of a bus station I had a good view of an outside staircase leading up to the restaurant, but it was so placed that all I could see on the staircase were feet; large feet, small feet, light feet, dragging feet, feet that skipped lightly upwards, others that stumped wearily downwards, one step at a time, all sorts of footwear; sandals, boots, flipflops, stilettos, or good solid lace-ups — all presumably carrying a body. Some people say, just to make conversation, perhaps, that you can learn something about people's characters from the sort of shoes they wear. I don't know; but it certainly seems that the style of shoe isn't always dictated by the needs of

the foot but by fashion or fancy.

Feet though very important seem generally to be a despised part of the body; burden-bearers so often are! In the book *General next to God*, by Richard Collier, a book about the Salvation Army, the venture into India is recounted. A Dundee girl Elizabeth Geike wins her first converts because, lacking forceps, she used her teeth to pull a thorn out of a man's poisoned foot. 'They never fully understood her sermons, but they understood that to save a life a white woman had placed her lips, the most sacred part of the body, upon the most despised member the foot.'

Feet, because they carry burdens, have their problems: shoes that pinch or rub, arches that drop, bones which get out of place. How often I feel like my poor feet; rubbed-up by people, squeezed by circumstances, sometimes 'out of joint', sometimes sagging, often just weary!

Caring for the burdened

Jesus didn't despise feet. He washed them for His disciples. Using cool water He washed away the dust and sweat of the day; His gentle hands soothed away the aches as He dried them. And Jesus does this for us. He cares for the burdened, the down-trodden, the hurt and the work soiled. Missionaries do this too.

Leprosy affects many feet, and because leprosy takes away feeling, feet are often damaged and become infected and gangrenous. At Kivuvu, near Kimpese, the 'Place of Hope', surgery has been carried out through the years to repair feet and special shoes designed and made to protect them, shoes which are soft yet strong and perfectly smooth inside, which will not cause blisters. At Chandraghona, in Bangladesh, and all over the world through the Leprosy Mission, feet, and through them, people are being healed.

Jiggers

There are other things which attack the feet, such as jiggers. They are tiny creatures in the soil which burrow into unsuspecting feet and need to be removed before the eggs are laid and hatch. This can be quickly done using a sterilized needle, but one usually needs somebody else to do it. I am reminded of Irene Masters at Bolobo who regularly treated an old beggar man who had no family to care for him. Each week he went to her house. Painstakingly Irene worked on his feet, cleaning them up and each week reducing the jiggers. His feet improved as the jiggers became less, but he will never be entirely free of them because he goes barefoot and so is continually being re-infected. Wearing sandals or shoes is not always a protection in sandy regions since sand has a habit of getting into everything.

There are diseases too which can enter through the feet and affect the whole



Happy leprosy patient, Kivuvu, Kimpese

body, and can be transmitted like a message to somebody else.

In Old Testament times it was a terrible thing to be chosen to carry bad news; it was almost certainly a death warrant; the recipient seemed to hold the bearer responsible for the message

itself. I used to wonder at the saying, in Isaiah 52:7, 'How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him who brings good news.' By the time the news is brought by one who has toiled over the mountain the feet must be weary, sore and smelly — not beautiful. It is beauty of the message which spills

over onto the bearer.

Missionaries carry the Good News; Their feet may suffer in the heat from corns, bunions, fallen arches and even jiggers — but they are still beautiful.

Have you got beautiful feet?



Using the footbath in the new leprosy ward at Pimu

Six Months — Was it Worth it?

*Weighing
a baby
at
Berhampur*



Thoughts from a volunteer by Alison Cottam

I have recently returned from India where I spent six months as a volunteer with the Baptist Missionary Society helping out at the Christian Hospital for Women and Children, Berhampur. This is a hospital of over 100 beds which deals mainly with maternity patients. A BMS missionary, Dr Betty Marsh, is Medical Superintendent there.

Owing to current visa regulations new entrants to India on a British passport can only remain in the country for six months. When I flew out to India in

October 1984 we wondered whether I might be able to renew my visa after that time, but this proved impossible. When I returned home in April 1985 various friends and colleagues were surprised to see me back so soon. 'All that way, just for six months — was it worth it?' Yes it was worth it. It has been a valuable experience, despite some of the disadvantages of short term service.

Working overseas was something that had appealed to me for several years. Indeed it was my main motivation for



undertaking midwifery training. I felt it would be a way in which I could serve God and put my training to good use. It has been said that people undertaking missionary or voluntary work overseas gain a tremendous amount, although one's motivation must be essentially to give.

Church support

In applying to BMS, I needed the support of the church I attended. Christchurch Baptist, Welwyn Garden City not only gave their approval, but

also their love, prayers, practical help and financial support. My appreciation of the fellowship as a caring 'family' has grown and maybe others were blessed too through their giving and caring. Going to India also increased my awareness of how lovingly God looks after His children. He knew my resources and limitations, the things I would enjoy and those I would find hard. He kept me safe, helped me to cope and blessed me in many ways.

Looking back, I am amazed at how many memorable experiences – some good, some bad – were packed into six short months. My trip to India was my first to a developing country. However much one tries to prepare for the experience, through reading and discussion, many aspects of life there still come as a surprise. A medical student visiting us said of her journey from Calcutta airport: 'It was like watching a film.' The sight of people living in makeshift dwellings, driving bullock carts, sleeping rough on the streets, initially has an air of unreality. I was sometimes conscious of an incongruous mixture of the familiar and the new – for example seeing Cadbury's chocolate and Pears soap amidst locally manufactured items in the shops. Comparisons of Indian life with English life provoked some wry humour. Can you imagine someone in England leaping aboard your bus to sell you bananas? More soberly, can you imagine English housewives queueing at the well for their water or trying to rear a large family on a tiny income. Inevitably I was often conscious of the affluence of the west contrasting starkly with the poverty of Asia.

Memorable start

On my first full day in India Mrs Gandhi, the prime minister, was assassinated and we witnessed some of the repercussions from that event. A memorable start to my visit! Plesanter recollections are of a meeting with Princess Anne, who visited Orissa with Save the Children Fund in February. I remember with gratitude the hospitality of Betty's acquaintances in Berhampur and the opportunity to attend an Indian wedding and various other feasts and celebrations.

As a nurse/midwife I found it

fascinating to visit a village community health project, a nursery run by Mother Theresa's nuns, a girls' hostel, a school for the blind and an 'eye camp' for cataracts sufferers. Travelling provided some novel experiences – and some hair-raising ones too, as driving standards leave much to be desired! My last fortnight in India was spent visiting Delhi, Agra and Nusssoon. We saw the Taj Mahal and other famous monuments. We contrasted the noise and bustle of modern Delhi with the more peaceful surroundings of Mussoon in the foothills of the Himalayas. India is a vast country and so in six months I only caught a glimpse of her culture and landscape – but an unforgettable glimpse all the same.

So different

I was primarily in India to work as a midwife however and so much of my time was occupied with this. Again I was struck by tremendous contrasts. The conditions in the Berhampur hospital were quite different from anything I had experienced in the NHS! I was alternately amazed, intrigued and horrified. At first sight it was easy to be critical. For instance, having been trained to sterilize infant feeding equipment, I was concerned when I saw mothers giving their babies water from utensils that were far from sterile. I had to re-adjust my thinking, to accept that sterilizing was not a realistic aim and that encouraging cleanliness was the goal to which I should be working.

Sometimes I wished for the company of another English midwife with whom I could discuss work and share ideas and concerns. Breast feeding has to be encouraged because the alternatives – using artificial milk or cow's milk – were fraught with hazards for the baby. Many of the women seemed to breastfeed without difficulty, although they often needed reassurance that their milk supply was adequate. It was fascinating to see childbirth and infant care in a new setting and feel that I benefited as a midwife from gaining this wider experience.

Some of the conditions and practices I saw would only be found in textbooks at home. It was interesting to compare cultural practices associated with birth,



Alison Cottam on a ward round

to see the role of the family in caring for our patients and to witness the reaction of women to the pain of childbirth. I admired the stoicism with which they faced surgery under spinal anaesthesia and was surprised at the speed with which they recovered from traumatic experiences such as forceps delivery.

It was a joy to meet the patients and I was grateful for the readiness with which they accepted me. I would love to have got to know some of them better, to be able to find out more about their background and outlook on life. I wish too that I could have given them more teaching.

Midwifery is far more than delivering babies. It involves helping pregnant and newly delivered women to care for themselves and also their babies. Many infants die in India because their mothers lack basic knowledge for preventing or remedying conditions such as malnutrition and diarrhoea. My limited Oriya vocabulary enabled me to instruct them to some extent. Yet successful teaching involves far more than giving instructions – it is concerned with understanding needs and working to change beliefs and attitudes in an acceptable way. In six months my language skills did not develop adequately in this respect.

Extra hands

Nurses working on the wards had little supervision from senior nursing staff –

the two sisters were almost fully occupied with classroom teaching. Standards of nursing care suffered as a result. I worked amongst them as an 'extra pair of hands' trying to give a certain amount of practical teaching when appropriate. I felt my contribution as a short-term worker was fairly limited. One needs a good understanding of the working environment and culture as well as plenty of patience, wisdom and leadership skills to raise levels of nursing care significantly.

The student nurses studied in English and so I became involved in classroom teaching – a new experience for me. I enjoyed this as it enabled me to get to know the nurses better. It was also valuable in encouraging me to revise subjects I had studied in my own training and tackle new ones such as First Aid. Again, a long-term worker would be able to make a more useful contribution to education of nurses at the hospital. Teaching material and methods need to be adapted to suit the culture and resources. The nurses were very good to me, willingly accepting me into their midst, helping me learn a little Oriya, showing friendship and hospitality, bearing with my mistakes and faults. I valued the opportunity to meet them. I was struck by their cheerfulness and the way in which they coped with long hours of work and study. The work that I did as a midwife and teacher is hard to evaluate. Although my contribution was limited, I hope that the hospital

benefited in some way from my presence.

Tasting missionary life

BMS has only a small number of missionaries working out in India now. I met all of them during my stay plus volunteers, medical students and several missionaries from other societies. They included some very hardworking, talented and hospitable individuals. A taste of 'missionary life' develops an awareness of the prayer and practical needs of Christians working overseas, so that I am able to respond to those needs more readily.

Another benefit of going to India has been that I can come home and tell others about it. Friends, relatives, church members, and work colleagues have all shown an interest in my experiences. Six months abroad does not make me an expert on medical missionary work in the Third World. Yet I do have something to share – about conditions and needs in India and ways in which God cares for those who serve Him there.

The future

What of the Future? Returning home was exciting – it has been lovely to see family, friends and the beautiful English landscape again. I have a renewed appreciation for my surroundings. Yet after only a few weeks, I find myself wondering about further work in a developing country. I now have a deeper awareness of what it involves – the joys and the hardships, the benefits and the problems. This should help me to plan more realistically and maybe to settle into a new environment more quickly and work better.

In conclusion, I'm very glad that I had the opportunity to go to India. Short term work does have distinct disadvantages in that it takes time to settle into new surroundings and learn the language, so that six months is not really long enough to give of one's best. Yet I feel the benefits of the experience outweighed the disadvantages. I am grateful to BMS for sending me overseas and also to Dr Betty Marsh for her help and hospitality during my time in India.

COMMENTS QUESTIONS QUOTES

By DEKA

I suppose there are times when all of us need to do some 'stock-taking', as it were, in relation to our Christian life. I know it may not be a comfortable thing to do, and it's hard to be honest with yourself (at least, I find it so!) But where does our commitment lie? Are we progressing towards the goals that in our 'best' moments we really want to aim at?

Reading about a group that did some honest sharing in Zaire, set me thinking again along these lines. This is the description of a seminar for catechists, deacons and deaconesses studying together the life of the church.

We looked at the life of the church as a whole and examined whether or not it is fulfilling its principal role – that of the Great Commission – studied church growth, unity in the church (tribal differences are not uncommonly the root of disharmony among believers in the church), how effectively pastors, catechists, deacons and missionaries are fulfilling their many and various responsibilities in the leadership of the church.

Q Q Q Q Q

The conclusion drawn by all was that, we as the church are a long way off target. The response made was a commitment by all to pray and work for the restoration of the life of the church.

Part of the meaning of partnership is being willing to learn from our partners – listening to what they are saying, learning how we appear in their eyes,

perhaps seeing our weakness in their strength. After describing how a family in trouble had been helped there was this comment in a letter from Brazil.

It all sounds very similar to Britain, doesn't it? Perhaps the main differences are in the zeal of church members to participate in evangelism, bringing their friends along and talking openly about their faith.

Q Q Q Q Q

Recently I was talking with a young Christian friend who was eagerly


sharing her joy in the Lord, and how she had only been enabled to cope with difficult circumstances because of having Him as her Saviour. She was talking about the future, of what she should do and where the Lord would have her serve. There was an air of confident, happy, excited expectation about all that lies ahead. I found myself refreshed and convicted – is that the way I look at the future?

'We look with anticipation and excitement as to what God has for us next' – so write a couple.

I am reminded of the words of that old hymn 'The Lord hath yet more light and truth to break forth from his word'. It is exciting.



A patient at Berhampur



MISSIONTALK

Tensions in Jamaica

A GROWING division between established churches and evangelical groups could seriously affect church work in Jamaica. The tensions have arisen because of criticism, levelled at established churches for their alleged involvement in political affairs, by the government of Prime Minister Edward Seaga. Meanwhile, evangelical groups enjoy his support — their theological conservatism being seen to walk closely with a conservative political stance.

There are many problems in Jamaica. It has suffered from unrelenting recession since 1974. The socialist government of the People's National Party, led by Michael Manley was replaced by the conservative Jamaican Labour Party. However, the problems of inflation, economic weakness and low exports remain.

75 per cent of Jamaica's population of two million are Protestant. Many of these are nominal Christians. There is a real need for in-depth church education and evangelism. Established churches, the largest being Anglican and Baptist, are involved in ministries which address the problems of poverty, unemployment, high rates of illegitimacy among young girls,

etc. Independent evangelical groups and sects have found great support in this climate.

The recent tensions arose from an offer by the Jamaican Council of Churches, which represents the mainstream churches, to mediate in a national labour dispute. A general strike by six major labour unions in Jamaica brought the country to a standstill for two days in June. The strikers were protesting at low wages, mass firings and continuing inflation.

The government refused the mediation of the JCC and criticized it for meddling in political affairs. The problem was intensified when the Secretary of the JCC, Edmund Davis, lay responsibility for the unrest at the feet of the government. In contrast, representatives of evangelical, pentecostal and adventist groups issued a statement of support for Seaga.

Missionary vision in Jamaica has waned during past years. This division will disrupt efforts at evangelism and Christian education in a society yearning for hope and opportunity.

From 1948 to 1984 BMS missionary David Jelleyman was

involved in ministerial training at the United Theological College of the West Indies, while his wife Christine taught at the Calabar High School. They have since

retired from service, and the Jamaica Baptist Union has asked the BMS to find a tutor for the Theological College in time for its Academic year 1987/1988.

MISSIONARY MOTIVE

The Question

But why desert your kin? God knows
What good you'll do.
Do you?

Who seek to interfere with those
Whose happiness is still
The ancient past, whose magic onward flows.

And as you share your scientific skill
Thus giving light
And might
For suffering minds and bodies, still
Won't you the spirit kill
With deadening love of car and little pill?

Or as you teach the narrow way
That leads to life,
Won't strife
With those for whom you would but pray
To find the father's will,
Into your hearts put sinful night for day?

The Reply

It's true that much we do is vain
Beneath this sun,
But One
There is who will uproot the pain
Of strife, and hearts refill
With magic new, and give all joy for gain.

David Pearce 1931-1985
former BMS missionary at Kimpese and Bolobo.

Doctors' Retreat

THE centre was not crowded out; the overflow accommodation certainly was not required; we had enough hymn books to cope; the food was quite adequate. The many unknowns and uncertainties of organizing a conference had turned into realities. The first Christian Doctors' retreat in Zaire had begun at CECO, Kimpese with 25 delegates present.

There were five missionaries there, including the Rev Charlie Harvey who gave the key addresses. The other delegates were Zairian doctors, two dentists, three medical students and the Director of IME. I sensed a certain anxiety among the delegates, who were not used to such a conference, however the lead given by Charlie Harvey and the good mixing of those who had come from Kinshasa rapidly changed the mood to one of eager participation.

The doctors at IME had decided it would be worthwhile holding a spiritual retreat and to send invitations to other Christian doctors in Bas Zaire and Kinshasa, including the University students. A date was chosen to suit our main speaker; a Canadian Baptist based at IME; the local venue was booked; the subject matter was chosen and the invitations were issued.

We were taught more about our relationship to God and His service, and we shared in short seminars about our use of time, money, our care of the dying and our relationship to patients, and technical medical attitudes. Each seminar was led by a doctor from IME. The spiritual input from our Kinshasa colleagues was much appreciated, and the medical students were greatly helped, although they tended, understandably to be the more reserved members of the group.

Some delegates had to drop out at the last moment because their arrangements to hire a bus in Kinshasa fell through, at the eleventh hour, but I was impressed that some doctors simply, and courageously, came down on the small taxi buses. We were certainly encouraged to be more outward looking by these men. It was however, disappointing that some doctors living closer to IME did not attend. One, in fact, asked that we should pay all his conference costs — a common event at government medical conferences.

We were very grateful too, to the Hospital Christian Fellowship who kindly provided a good range of material for the Christian Medical Bookstall.

At the last meal the delegates

were unanimous in their desire to have further retreats but at a better time for the students (we'd unfortunately chosen a time just before exams). The need to have spiritual content along with subjects of academic interest was suggested for day seminars. The great need for medical text books was voiced.

There was a move to make it a National Conference, but that would put the cost up considerably. We hope the conference will help the doctors in the smaller mission hospitals of Bas Zaire in both medical and spiritual fields. Would you pray that this end may be fulfilled since there is an obvious felt and real need to be supplied.



Charlie Harvey speaker at the Doctors' Retreat



Some of those who attended the Doctors' Retreat, Kimpese

Calling the nation to reconciliation

THE first ecumenical meeting for many years took place in Kandy, Sri Lanka, from 5-10 August. The conference, met to discuss 'tasks and opportunities before Christians in Sri Lanka today, and to make plans for their fulfilment in a spirit of ecumenical co-operation'.

Sri Lanka has greatly suffered in recent years from inter-communal violence. Tensions still exist between the Sinhalese majority and Tamil minority. An announcement before the meeting stated that, '... the churches perceive that they have to perform an important task in calling the nation to the ways of justice, peace and reconciliation. They seek to fulfil these tasks in the context of other religions in our country and in co-operation with them.'

Baptist leaders took part in the conference along with Anglican,

Methodist and Catholic representatives.

The BMS has been working in this predominantly Buddhist country since 1812. BMS missionaries have contributed much to Sri Lankan life. The most famous of these is probably Charles Carter, whose English/Sinhala dictionary is still the basis of modern dictionaries in Sri Lanka.

There are at present two BMS missionaries in Colombo, Sri Lanka. Peter and Margaret Goodall are serving at the Cinnamon Gardens Baptist Church. Through their church they are very much involved in promoting understanding and reconciliation in the community. It is hoped that two former missionaries will be returning to work in Sri Lanka in the near future.

Revival in Brazil

'THE evangelistic movement in Brazil is growing faster than the country's population,' says Nilson Fanini, pastor of the First Baptist Church in Niteroi, Brazil. Fanini who has been called the 'Billy Graham of the Third World' estimates that of the 120 million Brazilians, 'some 25 million are practising evangelicals'.

About 83 per cent of Brazilians are baptized into the Catholic church. However, only ten per cent are practising Catholics. The Catholic church has often been associated with supporting the economic status quo in Brazil, and has been accused of not speaking up for the poor and needy. More recently, however, Catholic bishops and clergy have spoken out on behalf of Brazil's poor and indigenous people. The rise of 'liberation theology' has voiced some of the general disillusionment with the established church. However, Nilson Fanini says: 'Even the liberation theologians are losing ground in Brazil because people don't want to hear about politics. They are fighting over how to solve temporal problems but people are concerned with eternal problems. In the Third World, you've got to preach the whole Gospel, and that means caring for the soul, mind and physical needs.'

Spiritism pervades every social group and influences many people. Against this background,

the evangelical church with its emphasis on a personal relationship with a loving God, has been increasing rapidly.

The growth in 'traditional' Protestant churches has not been so great. However, applications to theological colleges have increased dramatically. There is a real need for well trained pastors and evangelists.

'There is a vacuum in the Brazilian heart. The field is ready for harvest and whoever gets there first will reap it,' says Nilson Fanini.

The First Baptist Church of Niteroi owns a television station which reaches over 40 million people each week. This preaching ministry is also aired over a network of radio stations throughout Brazil. The church also has an extensive social concern ministry. Last year alone, the church, which operates 22 free medical and dental clinics, distributed 120 tons of food, rebuilt 150 shanty homes, awarded 700 educational scholarships and adopted 3,000 babies from Rio area slums.

Brazil offers great opportunity for mission activity. The BMS is involved in many areas of Brazil, with personnel helping in church work, evangelism, theological training, lay training and health care.

An enjoyable song

From Rev Norman Walker

MANY thanks for printing Janice Brown's lovely song, 'Jesus said, make the people sit down', in the June *Herald*. We tried it out in our service in conjunction with a sermon on John 6, and found the words very fitting and the tune fairly easy to pick up. It was an enjoyable song to sing and we have now used it twice.

Janice Brown has an obvious talent and I look forward to seeing more of her songs in the *Herald*.

REV NORMAN WALKER
St Paul's Baptist Church,
Skegness

From Dr S G Browne

MY wife, Mali, and I were very interested in the article entitled 'Broadcasting to China' which appeared in the May *Herald*, and in the letter from the Editor of *Bridge*, Hong Kong in reply.

We are rather surprised that no mention is made of the part played by the late Dr H R Williamson in the maintenance of links with Chinese Christians after 1949. While Foreign Secretary of the BMS, Dr Williamson was able to prepare and send to China, through the BBC, a weekly programme beamed to mainland China — 'A Christian looks at the news'. Quite a number of letters were received at the BBC from Christians in inland China, addressed to him by his Chinese name Wei Li Mu.

S G BROWNE

Sutton,
Surrey

Not the best theology

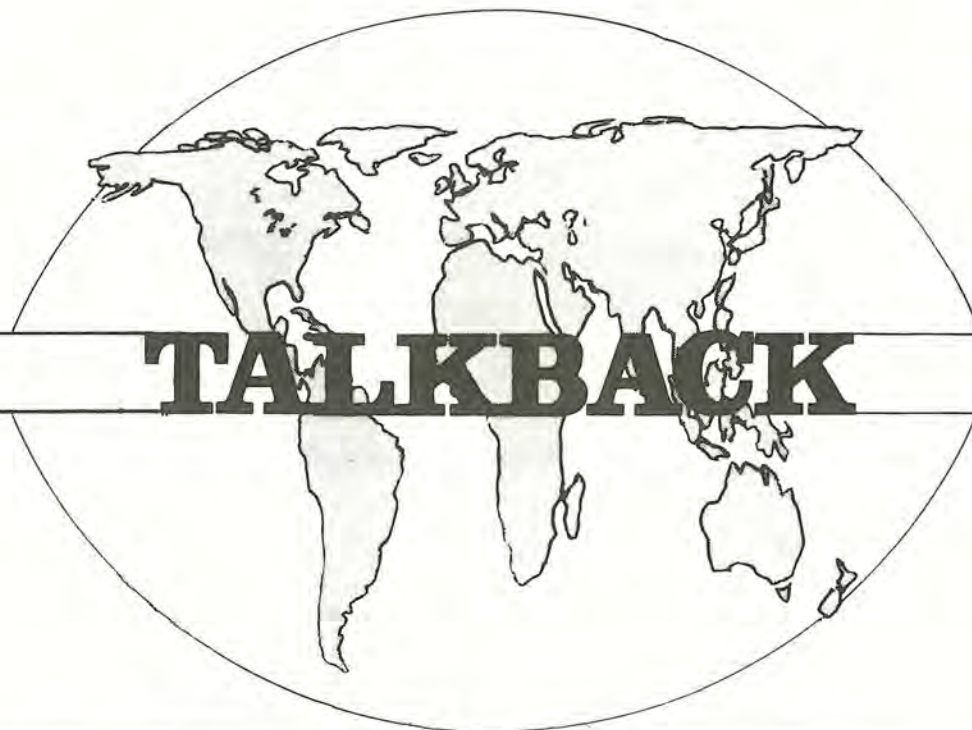
From Rev Alec Balfe-Mitchell

JUST a word in defence of the Revd Barry Vendy who came under gentle, but nonetheless unjustified, attack in two letters in September's 'Talkback'.

I think I can understand the reasons for the attitudes behind what both 'the Stringers' and 'D Hunter' say in their respective letters (beware the type which begins 'with regret' or 'some alarm!') At the same time, that doesn't mean that what your September correspondents have to say is the best theology of which Baptists are capable!

The Stringers' and D Hunter's letters have in common (amongst other things) a singling out of Mr Vendy's phrase 'appreciation of other world religions in their richness' — and both omit the rest of the original — 'rather than dismissing them'! It seems that Mr Vendy's critics are simply unwilling — if not unable — to do precisely that humble yet rewarding act of appreciation for which he appealed.

But apart from sadness at their loss, I also feel anger towards these correspondents because of their arrogance, narrowness



TALKBACK

The Key

From Valerie Lyndon

It was with interest that the missionary committee of Shoeburyness and Thorpe Bay Baptist Church read and discussed the article in April's *Missionary Herald*, 'The Key'.

The 'feed back' we would offer is something we are about to try, in increasing missionary interest. Each new member is given a folder with local church information and a stewardship form. We are hoping to have a

leaflet printed giving details about the Birthday Scheme, Shareholders and globes etc. and who the missionary committee members are and how to obtain the *Missionary Herald*. This would be given with the folder to try and show missionary work as part of the local work and responsibility.

MISS VALERIE LYNDON

Shoeburyness
Essex

and dogmatism. The Stringers' claim that 'the reality of Christian mission is that all other religions are utterly bankrupt' is an example of an appalling attitude which reflects outdated thinking and quite offensively chauvinistic assumptions. If what the Stringers say is an example of a true Christian understanding then may I be first to abandon the ship.

I trust I am not alone in reaffirming Barry Vendy's recognition of the richness of other world religions. For myself, I thank God for the

profound wealth of the Buddhist tradition, which continues to provide some truly enlightening insights and seems to be leading several contemporary Christians into an exciting new age of religion without dogma.

REV ALEC BALFE-MITCHELL
Moss Side Baptist Church
Manchester

The opinions expressed in Talkback letters are those of the correspondents and do not necessarily reflect the policies of the Baptist Missionary Society.

Respecting others

From Reud Barry Vendy

THERE is evidently a real disagreement between my point of view, expressed in the *June Herald* (don't blame the BMS for my opinions, by the way), and that of Mr Hunter, and Mr and Mrs Stringer. I would like to make it clear, though, that my original letter in no way denied that Jesus is 'The way, the truth and the life'. Nor did I suggest that all religions are, for example, equally valid ways of access to God, lest anybody interpret me as saying that.

But does the fact that I am a committed Christian require that I reject everyone else's point of view, as 'utterly bankrupt'? As Christians, we expect our witness to be heard and our point of view respected. Can we not extend the same courtesy to others? Otherwise, we give the clear impression of being ready to talk, but not to listen!

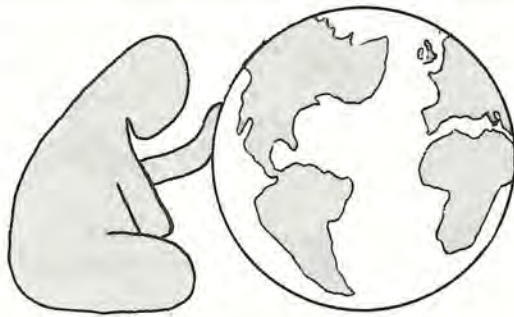
I am no expert on world religions. I do know that there

are great differences between them, and that in each you can probably find a vast range from superstition to profundity. I also believe they often contain rewarding insights into the world. And I am left thinking this – can religions which have bred the likes of Gandhi and Tagore, Martin Buber and Lionel Bluhm, be entirely bad?

Simply to talk like this about Hinduism or Judaism does not mean I am on the point of becoming a Hindu or a Jew. It is not a case of agreeing with or espousing the beliefs of others, but rather of respecting them, and being willing to see the good in them. Jesus Christ holds my allegiance – albeit in a very poor way – I do not feel threatened by the existence of other points of view.

Here is our world, dying from poverty, starvation and war. Isn't this a time for mutual understanding and respect?

REV BARRY VENDY
Stroud, Gloucester



CALL TO

PRAYER

1784 - 1985

Nepal – UMN Economic Development Board 3-9 November

THE United Mission to Nepal is working in many different ways to promote the development of the country. However, it does not go its own independent way, but, working by invitation of the government, it sets up different projects and trains Nepalis who eventually take them over once they have been established. Butwal, where David Payne, a metallurgist, and Mike (a quantity surveyor) and Linda Wheller are based, is the UMN's industrial and technical centre. Having established projects like a plywood factory, and engineering works, and biogas plants, the latest enterprise is the Himal Hydro and General Construction company, working in the area of tunnelling for hydro-electric and irrigation projects. At Butwal is the Technical Institute and the Development Consultancy Service. It is involved with the Andhi Khola project, further to the north, a hydro electricity project. At the end of June part of the tunnel there caved in and one man suffered a broken collar bone and ribs, emphasizing the dangers involved in a project that hopes, through rural electrification, irrigation, reforestation, the development and agriculture and employment prospects, to lift the 70 per cent of the population, who are living below the subsistence level, up to self-sufficiency. We remember Cliff and Chris Eaton at present on leave of absence.

Angola 10-16 November

IN spite of many difficulties, the Evangelical Baptist Church in Angola (IEBA) continues to expand its activities. In Luanda, the capital city, new parishes have been started with congregations meeting in the simplest buildings or shelters. At the Petroangola Centre, a trades' training centre along with medical work and women's domestic courses have got underway. Many miles to the north, where the majority of IEBA churches are to be found, congregations are still being organized. Leadership is strong and new students trained at the Kibokolo Bible School are contributing now to the building up of the Church and the strengthening of its witness in a situation of economic weakness and uncertainty about the future.

India – Orissa: Cuttack Diocese 17-23 November

ACCORDING to Pansy James, life and work in India at the moment is full of uncertainties. Now that two of her colleagues in Orissa have had to return to the UK she is one of only three BMS missionaries in that part of India and she wonders how many years of service are left. Pansy is once again acting as secretary of the Stewart School in Cuttack and is pleased to be working alongside a new principal, Mr Ashok Kumar Patra. He is a local Christian who has taken early retirement, at the age of 49, from government service, incurring some financial sacrifice, to take up this post. At Mr Patra's request, Pansy James is taking a few periods of English Literature in the senior school. She is already in charge of the school's nursery section, which meets on the Thompson Training Institute Compound. She reports that she has taken up her old teaching duties in the Institute with the trainee teachers. 'Here,' she says, 'I can enjoy a variety of teaching situations that I would never experience in the UK. Perhaps I will also be able to fit in my sewing classes again with the wives of the Theological School students.'

Bangladesh – Barisal and Faridpur 24-30 November

THE BMS has no missionaries serving in the districts of Barisal and Faridpur since the return home, earlier this year, of Jim and Jan Watson. However, there is a real desire in the churches to renew their spiritual life and to set goals for the work of reaching both Muslims and Hindus with the Gospel. In the large commercial town of Jalakhati, 13 miles from Barisal, witness is centred on the New Gospel Bookroom and we are asked to pray for its continued use. Many Christians in Bangladesh have been educated at the Boys' and Girls' High Schools. Pray for Mr Shishir Halder and Miss Lila Halder the headmaster and headmistress. There are over 70 village churches in the Barisal and Faridpur districts. Pray that there may be meaningful spiritual worship and adequate preparation by the pastors, Sunday School organizers and teachers. We need also to remember the pastoral superintendent of Barisal association, the Rev Poritosh Biswas, and the Rev Martin Adhikary of the Faridpur association. At Santi Kutir the clinics are run by a member of our sister German Liebenzeller Mission.

Lord teach us what to say.

We are searching for words which will win an eager response to your love, turning the hearers about to face you and face life with you.

We are searching for words to put the Gospel into the languages of the people, the Bible into every tongue, and Christ into every heart.

We are searching for words which create friendship, enlarge life, cement partnerships, honest words and charitable, healing words and wholesome.

We are searching for words which really communicate, break down isolation, overcome prejudice, doubt and animosity.

MISSIONARY MOVEMENTS

Arrivals

Mr and Mrs M Godfrey and family on 13 August from Upoto, Zaire.

Mr and Mrs J Davis and family on 13 August from Yakusu, Zaire.

Mrs M Hart and family on 21 August from Chandraghona, Bangladesh.

Mr and Mrs G Hemp on 24 August from São Paulo, Brazil.

Mr S Houghton on 30 August from Bolobo, Zaire.

Miss C Preston on 31 August from Dhaka, Bangladesh.

Departures

Mrs D Clark on 11 August to Kinshasa, Zaire.

Miss R Montacute on 11 August to Kinshasa, Zaire.

Miss I Strang on 13 August to Kathmandu, Nepal.

Mr O Clark on 21 August to Kinshasa, Zaire.

Mrs R Clinch on 21 August to Kinshasa, Zaire.

Mr and Mrs M Cranefield on 21 August to IME, Kimpese, Zaire.

Miss M Philpott on 21 August to Kisangani, Zaire.

Dr K and Mrs Russell on 21 August to IME, Kimpese, Zaire.

Miss R Williams on 21 August to Yakusu, Zaire.

Mr and Mrs J Passmore and family on 26 August to Dhaka, Bangladesh.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Secretaries acknowledge with grateful thanks the following legacies, and gifts sent anonymously (August 1985).

Legacies

Miss M Airey	£	10,500.00
Miss G W Bache		300.00
Rev J L Chown		1,400.00
Mrs W Cubitt		50.00

Miss G B Dowdell	1,600.00
Miss F A A Eve	1,336.59
Miss M J Hardy	3,492.16
Mrs E Heley	20.00
Mrs W M H Madge	50.00
Mrs L Mardle	50.00
Mrs E M Mills	2,443.01
Mr W T Padgett	15.00
E M Parr	6,765.50
Mary Phillips	100.00
Mrs N Phipps	100.00
M L Stower	5,174.73
Mrs M L Waterhouse	2,000.00
L Young	50.00

General Work

Anon: 80p; Anon: £30.00; Anon: £15.00; Anon: £5.00; Anon: £20.00; Cymro: £60.00; Anon: £5.00; Anon: £5.00; Anon: £4.00.

Bangladesh Relief

Anon: £5.00.

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May – Majorca

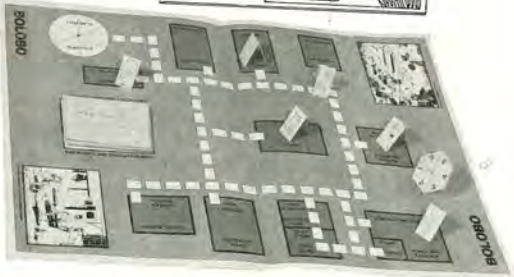
June – Lake District, Normandy (by coach)

Full 1986 Brochure available Mid-October

Please write to:

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Fuller details from the
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BMS SUMMER HOLIDAYS 1986

Penzance: 2-9 August
Pitlochry: 2-9 August
Eastbourne: All ages: 26 July-10 August
Eastbourne: Young people: 9-23 August
PHAB: Dover: 26 July-2 August
PHAB: Whalley Abbey: 31 Mar-5 April

Write to Rev D Martin for brochure
and booking form.

Further information about any of these notices can
be obtained from: Baptist Missionary Society,
93 Gloucester Place, London W1H 4AA.